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## **55. EMERGING INFECTIONS, TRANSITION AND BIOTERRORISM**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Over thirty new infectious human diseases since 1980 have been identified for the first time. The World is in the process of increased globalization and transition. Pathogens are in transition as well. Infection knows no national boundaries and this is well known to bioterrorists.

In the competition between people and microbes eternal vigilance is the price of human survival. This imperative provides a renewed stimulus to maximize the synergies of existing scientific and health networks. If we are to control infectious diseases we have to rehabilitate and renovate existing public health systems in developing and developed countries and to improve infectious diseases surveillance systems. To prevent and deter bioterrorism requires top-quality medical laboratories for microbiological procedures and epidemiological analyses.

The Croatian public health services successfully served during the five war years (1991- 1995) and five years of transition (1996 -2000). There were no significant differences in infectious disease incidence rates during those periods. After the war and transition our public health services rehabilitated the system and renovated the infectious diseases surveillance system. The purpose of this presentation is to illustrate, with Croatian public health services experiences, what renovation efforts are necessary to meet bioterrorism as a new challenge and how to prepare the surveillance system to distinguish natural and intentionally spread infectious diseases.

### **KEYWORDS**

Public health, transition, emerging infections, and bioterrorism